

Tahiti : Isle of Dreams

that beneath is ever tropic shade. Far
up most
valleys all over the island you may find
the *mape*
yet, but in the favoured lands to come
it is still a
common tree.

The road swings away from the sea
for a mile
or two. Giant ferns rising from rich
thick green
grass, fewer and smaller coconut
plantations and
river after river mark our way. The
rainfall is
higher here, and never does Papeari
know the
droughts which leave Papeete a prey to
the sun in
the height of the Antipodean winter.
And then
suddenly, topping a little rise, the road
runs down
to Port Phaeton.

There is nothing like this anywhere
else in the
island, nor, for that matter, anywhere
else in the
south-eastern Pacific. A great harbour,
far in-
dented to right and left, drives in from
the sea and
all but succeeds in cutting Tahiti in
two. Halting
just there where the road debouches
upon a cause-
way that crosses a shallow arm of the

inlet, or
better still climbing up a little as is
possible to
overlook the whole bay, the scene below
and around
utterly fulfils the all but legendary
story of the
far South Seas. Gazing out to sea,
there is the